



The Department of Energy is responsible for the world's largest environmental cleanup program. This enormous technical challenge is a national priority that must be based on thorough, scientific analyses. Our nation must find solutions backed fully by Congress, state and local governments, Tribal Nations, regulators and stakeholders.

In the last five years, the Department has made substantial progress in systematically defining the scope, schedules, and life-cycle costs to meet this challenge and creating a step-by-step work plan to tackle it. *Accelerating Cleanup: Paths to Closure* outlines the Energy Department's evolving and dynamic cleanup program based on site-developed, project-by-project forecasts of the scope, schedule, and costs to complete the 353 projects that currently define the cleanup program.

Meeting the enormous cleanup challenge requires an enduring national commitment. This program will not succeed unless sufficient and consistent resources are available over the long term and unless the Department continually seeks efficient and cost-effective ways of doing business. As this report demonstrates, a long-term budget at current levels would enable the Department to accelerate the cleanup and closure of many of its sites. The accelerated cleanup would reduce health and environmental risks, make sites available for community re-use, and maintain our compliance to federal and state laws and agreements. Securing sufficient resources and achieving these commitments will remain a challenge. If adequate resources are not sustained, progress will be slower, health and environmental risks will last longer, and cleanup ultimately will cost even more.

Consistent with this Administration's initiative to work smarter, the Department's Environmental Management program will continue to seek opportunities to complete our cleanup work as quickly and efficiently as possible. At the same time, we will not accelerate cleanup by compromising cleanup standards or the health and safety of our workers.

The Department values our partnership with stakeholders, regulators, the Congress and Tribal Nations in developing and implementing our cleanup program at each site. The Department will continue to seek advice, support and guidance from our partners as the *Paths to Closure* report is updated.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to read "Federico Peña". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "P" at the end.

Federico Peña  
Secretary of Energy